

the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 and due to its outstanding significance was designated a National Historic Landmark district in 1978.

Since 1950, highway construction and urban renewal programs have significantly contributed to the neighborhood's economic decline and disrepair. The National Trust for Historic Preservation listed Jackson Ward on its "America's 11 Most Endangered Places" list in 2001 to bring national attention to the plight of this historic neighborhood.

Today, the area is showing strong signs of new life because of the African-American owned development companies who have successfully utilized the Federal Tax Credit program in Jackson Ward. The majority of the adaptive reuse projects are converting vacant residential townhouses into rental residential properties. During the Fiscal Year 2001, \$1.6 million in rehabilitation costs were spent in the Jackson Ward historic district. When combined with Virginia's 25% State Rehabilitation Tax Credit and other tax abatement programs, the Federal Tax Credit program has provided Jackson Ward an effective tool for helping deteriorated businesses and residential properties. New investors utilizing various forms of financial incentives have provided an impetus to others seeking home ownership in this re-emerging center of African-American heritage.

For more information on the Federal Tax Incentives Program, visit the web site at www2.cr.nps.gov/tips/tax/index.htm

Michigan Tourism and Cultural Heritage

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Michigan Humanities Council and the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs launched their

STATE INITIATIVES

"Michigan's Great Outdoors Culture Tour" partnership project in summer 1998. When the partnership project started, the partners expected these arts and heritage programs about the state's north woods and Great Lakes would reach underserved audiences in northern Michigan, as well as summer visitors in popular vacation destinations. Today, five years after the award-winning project's beginnings, audiences and hosts eagerly await the six-week, 97-program series, while its musicians, storytellers, dancers, historical role players, and cultural interpreters research and polish new program material gleaned from earlier seasons' experience. Regional interest in cultural programming has also increased.

"Michigan's Great Outdoors Culture Tour" is a vehicle for capturing and preserving little-known historical footnotes and anecdotes about Michigan's more rural, isolated northland. Topics range from heroic maritime rescues, mysterious northern legends, and timber country adventures to the natural history of scenic coastlines and vast woodlands and enduring sagas of pioneers and Native Americans. Northern Michigan's earliest residents were the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Odawa peoples, joined over three centuries by a diverse mix of ethnic immigrants—Norwegians, Swedish, Finnish, French, Cornish, Germans, Italians, Irish, Croatians, Dutch, and others—who worked in its woods, navigated its rivers and Great Lakes, dug its mines, and cleared and planted its farmlands. These diverse groups make up the story of Michigan, which the tour seeks to

celebrate.

Inspired by a Civilian Conservation Corps site visited on tour, veteran presenter Michael Deren developed a CCC character as part of his "The Past in Person" interpretations of common people whose labors built Michigan and the country. He interviewed four Michigan alumni of Roosevelt's "tree army" that planted thousands of acres of pine seedlings on burned-over land to help him "accurately tell the story of the CCC." His "enrollee" brings to life an organization dedicated to "conserving national (young men) and natural (trees, etc.) resources" and helps audiences "understand, learn and value what these men did" and what they, in turn, gained.

Other Culture Tour presenters also encounter anecdotes on tour, which they research and turn into songs, stories, or narrative presentations. Great Lakes musician Lee Murdock, for example, developed two maritime songs after learning stories during Culture Tour travels. Now, "The Scottish Hero" about an ill-fated rescue attempt at Lake Superior's Pt. Iroquois Lighthouse and a ghostly legend of a lighthouse keeper and his family on "St. Martin Island" in Lake Michigan adjacent to Green Bay are part of his repertoire.

One-hour evening programs occur in northern Lower Michigan and the Upper Peninsula July 1-August 15, 2002, are free of charge in local, state, and National Parks, National Forest recreation areas, and small rural museums under a partnership that pools limited resources of hosts and sponsors. The Culture Tour received the Forest Service's "Window on the

Past” 2000 heritage award and was among 24 “model” cultural tourism projects featured by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in a 2001 publication.

For more information on the Michigan Humanities Council, visit the web site at www.michiganhumanities.org/culturetour, or contact program coordinator Nancy Mathews at 906/789-9471, or email: paomihum@voyager.net.

Recent National Register Listings

Congregation Talmud Torah of Los Angeles

From 1915 until the mid-1980s, Congregation Talmud Torah served Eastern European Jewish immigrants in the culturally diverse neighborhood of Boyle Heights, described as “Los Angeles’ Ellis Island.” Los Angeles, according to the National Register nomination, has the third largest Jewish population outside of Israel and New York City. The site consists of two contributing structures: the brick synagogue and the wood framed school building, which housed the Los Angeles Jewish Academy, the first Jewish parochial elementary school in the city.

The Byzantine Revival structure housed the largest Jewish orthodox synagogue in the West. Congregation Talmud Torah, also known as Breed Street Shul, was listed in the National Register on November 4, 2001. Listing was based upon its architectural characteristics, association with religious and educational activities, and connection to Los Angeles’ social history.

American Beach Historic District

American Beach was developed as an ocean front resort for African Americans on the south end of Amelia Island, Florida, in 1935. The Pension Bureau of the Afro-American Life Insurance Company

bought three parcels of just north of Franklinton, a black township, to create a beach and resort for African American use, and in response to segregation laws in Florida. According to the National Register nomination, American Beach was “the most ambitious and intact of Florida’s beach resorts developed by and for African Americans...”

The American Beach Historic District was the location of choice for African Americans from Jacksonville and Fernandina, Florida, as well as notables such as Cab Calloway and Joe Louis. The historic district was listed in the National Register on January 28, 2002 for its association with African American ethnic heritage and community planning and development.

First African Missionary Baptist Church

The Romanesque Revival-style church in Bainbridge, Georgia was listed in the National Register on January 28, 2002. Congregation member, Thomas Bynes, an architect trained at the Tuskegee Institute, designed the church. First African Missionary is a monumental structure, with ornate features and vaulted ceilings, and is of brick construction.

First African Missionary has served the African American community since 1904 as a place of worship, a center for social and charitable organizations, and a focus for civic and political activity. Its listing is based upon signifi-

The Congregation Talmud Torah’s impressive and massive façade led it to being known as “Queen of the Shuls,” an icon of permanence to travel-weary immigrants. The site has fallen into disrepair, but plans are underway to rehabilitate Shul buildings as a community museum and cultural center. Photo courtesy of Bill Aron.





(above) **As premiere destination for African American vacationers** from northern Florida, American Beach provided a place for leisure and relaxation. Area teachers and professionals, and officers and employees of the Pension Bureau of the Afro-American Life Insurance Company frequented the beach resort. American Beach was considered the most prominent of the Florida segregated beaches. Photo courtesy of Joel McEachin.

(right) **Its sophisticated design and its relationship with the community** merited First African Missionary Baptist's listing in the National Register. Photo courtesy of James R. Lockhart.

(facing page, left) **Thomas Memorial A.M.E. Zion** was listed in the National Register in recognition of its architecture, social history, and ethnic heritage. Photo courtesy of Lynn Garofalini.

(facing page, right and above) **Chief John Ross** was one of the Cherokee who survived the "Trail of Tears" to settle in Oklahoma. At his Ross Cemetery gravesite is a marker acknowledging his participation in the War of 1812. Photos courtesy of Lois E. Albert.

cance in areas of architecture and African American ethnic heritage.

Thomas Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church

This late Gothic Revival style edifice is the home of the first African American church in Watertown, New York. Named for the president of the Board of Trustees, Frank Thomas, the membership of Thomas Memorial African Methodist A.M.E. Zion church was active in the Underground Railroad and anti-slavery fugitive activities. One of the church's early members of the Board of Trustees, Henry Barr, escaped to the North with the help of the Underground Railroad, prior to settling in Watertown in 1865.

The church was established in 1878, meeting in a private home before the faux-stone building was constructed in 1909. The church edifice still serves the congregation



as a place of worship and a center for cultural activities for the African American community. It was listed in the National Register on March 6, 2002 for its architectural merits and its association with African American ethnic heritage.

Tennessee and Georgia to Oklahoma. Many of the individuals interred in Ross Cemetery, including Chief John, survived the migration. Several of those who made up the original governing body of the Indian Nation are

buried there as well. The cemetery sits just outside of Park Hill and four miles away from Tahlequah, capital city of the Cherokee Nation. Ross Cemetery was listed in the National Register on March 7, 2002.

Ross Cemetery

Located in Cherokee County, Oklahoma, the Ross Cemetery is the only place associated with Chief John Ross in Oklahoma. Ross, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation from 1828-1866 and veteran of the War of 1812, and his family are interred in the cemetery. The cemetery is also significant to the Cherokee Nation as representative of the relocation to Indian Territory.

The forced removal of the Cherokee Nation on the "Trail of Tears" in 1838-1839 saw some 16,000 Cherokee traverse from

